

will not leave unlacerated a single part of my body.'* In the presence of such splendid fidelity and such unswerving faith, which made even the weakest strong and able to endure, one sees why the eventual triumph of the Church was certain and assured. One can also understand why the memory and the relics of the martyrs were preserved with such passionate devotion ; why their graves were considered holy and credited with powers of healing; and why, too, the names of their persecutors were remembered with such furious hatred. It may be too much to expect the early chroniclers of the Church to be fair to those who framed and those who put into execution the edicts of persecution, but we, at least, after so many centuries, and after so many persecutions framed and directed by the Churches themselves, must try to look at the question from both sides and take note of the absolute refusal of the Christian Church to consent to the slightest compromise in its attitude of hostility to the religious system which It had already dangerously undermined.

It is not easy from a study of the *Passions of the Saints* to draw any sweeping generalisations as to what the public at large thought of the torture and execution of Christians. We get a glimpse, indeed, of the ferocity of the populace at Rome when Max-imian went thither to celebrate the Ludi Cereales In 304. The " Passion of St. Savinus " shews an excited crowd gathered in the Circus Maximus, roaring for blood and repeating twelve times over the savage cry, " Away with the Christians and our happiness is complete. By the head of Augustus let not a Christ-